

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Analyzing a literary work is not an easy task. This is caused by the language used in literary work and the students' incapability to combine the elements of literary work. The language in literary work is considered too difficult for the students, as the author in his novel, the playwright in his play, or the poet in his poem uses various expressions to write his literary work. Therefore, it is a hard job for the students to grasp or to understand the exact meanings of the story.

Literature is said to be so important as firstly, it contains people's values, thoughts, problems, and conflicts. To say the least, it never apart from human-beings' life. Secondly, by studying literature will enlarge students' knowledge and build their intellectual. As Williams (1951:8) states, "Literature is a vast treasure from which readers can obtain the materials and build up their intellectual and moral knowledge".

Simon and Schuster (1966:7) also state, "By analyzing literature, the readers not only develop their intellectual and emotional skills but also aware of many of the things that go on in the fiction".

Since literature gives profit to the readers, it appeals to the writer to forward literary study as the subject matter of her thesis. By studying literature, she gets not only the basic abilities in reading but also special skill of interpreting, appreciating, judging, and understanding what is read.

The writer chooses novel as the subject of her research since it is different from drama or short story. Novel has its length, which makes it possible for the writer to develop all the basic elements of the novel through plot, characters, setting, and the theme, to achieve the purpose of the writer. Simon and Schuster (1966:105) say, "The length of the novel is particularly suited to deal with the effect on character of the passage of time. It expands in space as well as in time; therefore, novel is decidedly not meant to be read at a single sitting".

In order to achieve a good understanding of the novel, the theme is to be determined because the theme is the soul of the novel. Peden (1971:50) says, "The more

one knows of the technical aspects the creation of a story, the greater his understanding pleasure in the work will be". Perrine (1966:106) also mentions "The ability to state theme is a test of our understanding of a story". Essentially, theme is the underlying idea of general truth about life, a description of how people act, and the effect their actions have upon themselves and others (Roberts 1966:63). Based on the reasons above, the writer focusses the study on theme.

Dostoevsky is chosen as he is one of the Russian's famous writers, and his works mostly convey the idea about facing reality. Dostoevsky tries to depict the life by mentioning the character, the setting and the conflict that are related to reality.

The Idiot is chosen because this novel is one of Dostoevsky's masterpieces besides Brother Karamazov, The Possessed (Hemmings 1977:126-130). Besides, this novel has not been investigated by any students of the English Department of FKIP Widya Mandala. Moreover, the author of the novel describes the story based on two important things namely, love and money. The reason why Dostoevsky choses them is simple because people cannot live without neither love nor money. Both of them play an important role in people's life. On the other hand

the power of love and money can also ruin the human beings' life. That's why the writer interested in choosing the novel to be discussed.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study deals with the development of the theme of The Idiot through other elements of the novel. The problems raised in this study are:

- 1) How is the theme developed through characterization?
- 2) How is the theme developed through plot?
- 3) How is the theme developed through setting?
- 4) What is the theme of The Idiot?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The Objectives of this study are to identify the theme of The Idiot. It is expected to find out:

- 1) the development theme through characterization.
- 2) the development theme through plot.
- 3) the development theme through setting.
- 4) the theme of Dostoevsky's novel - The Idiot.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to give an insight for the fellow students to understand novel better. Further, this study is also expected to give the students of Widya Mandala University more understanding at Dostoevsky's novel, The Idiot.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

The study concentrates on the discussion of theme in The Idiot. The writer analyzes the theme in this novel through its characters, plot, and setting for the theme is developed through them.

In relation with the characters, not all of the characters in the novel are discussed. The writer limits her study on discussing some characters who play an important role that influence the development of the theme.

There are many kinds of conflicts, but the writer only discusses the conflict between man against man, man against self, and man against society because they are necessary for the depth of her study and the most important parts in The Idiot.

The writer analyzes setting which concerns with time and place which the action occurs in the novel The Idiot so the readers will not misinterpret the action in

the story presented.

1.6 The Definition of Key Term

To avoid misinterpretation, it is better to define some terms applied in this thesis.

1. Plot

Plot is the pattern of incident which made up a story. In a good plot each incident has a purpose, grows out of the incidents that precedes it and leads into those that follow, and is related to the main idea in the story (Scott,1957:531).

2. Character

Character is an author's representation of human being specifically, of those inner qualities that determine how an individual react to various conditions or attempt to shape his or her environment (Robert, 1970:54)

3. Setting

Setting is the time, location, and general environment in which a piece of fiction occurs (Scott, 1957: 536).

4. Conflict

Conflict means a collision between a person or group and some elements in the world around or between various needs, impulses, or values within a person (Brooks,1975:6).

5. Theme

Theme is the underlying idea of general truth about life expressed in literary work (Robert, 1977:63). In other words, theme is the basic idea of life in general that is expressed in a literary work. Whatever asserted in it is about a comment on life, a description of how people act and the effect of their actions upon themselves and others (Pooley et al, 1967:536).

6. Practical Criticism

Practical Criticism is the criticism that deals with the discussion of particular works and writers (Abrams,1957:36-37). This criticism is divided into impressionistic and judicial criticism. The impressionistic criticism deals with feeling of an individual not reason. Judicial criticism deals with the critic's individual judgement on subject organization and techniques of the literary work based on general standard excellence.

1.7 The Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, the objective of the study, significance of the study, limitation of the study, definition of the key terms, and the organization of the thesis. The writer describes review of the related literature, in Chapter II. Then, Chapter III talks about Research Methodology. Chapter IV discusses the analysis of The Idiot to determine, find and state the theme. Finally, the whole discussions are concluded with some suggestions in Chapter V.